Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 04627 292034Z

70
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COA-02 IO-15 OMB-01 EB-11 COME-00

CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 NEA-10

TRSE-00 MBFR-04 SAJ-01 CG-00 DRC-01 /161 W
---------- 103649
P R 291900Z SEP 73
FM USMISSION NATO
RO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1859
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORTY
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS PRIORITY 3307
CINCLANT
COMICEDEFOR
USUN NEW YORK 1071
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 4627

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IC, NATO
SUBJECT: ICELAND-UK FISHERIES DISPUTE, PRIVATE COUNCIL MEETING

SUMMARY: SYG LUNS CALLED PRIVATE COUNCIL MEETING SEPTEMBER 28 TO CONSIDER PROBLEM OF POSSIBLE UK-ICELAND DIPLOMATIC BREAK. UK AND ICELANDIC PERMREPS REITERATED STANDARD GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. MAY PERMREPS EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN AND MADE PLEAS TO INDUCE THE PARTIES TO MOVE TOWARDS A COMPROMISE. LUNS INQUIRED WHETHER COUNCIL COULD ISSUE STATEMENT TO HMG AND GOI SAYING COUNCIL IS UNANIMOUS IN OPPOSITION TO BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO MEMBERS OF ALLIANCE, HOPES PARTIES WILL SIT DOWN TOGETHER TO NEGOTIATE DIFFERENCES, AND APPROVES ALL STEPS TOWARDS COMPROMISE. US PERMREP RUMSFELD REITERATED U.S. POSITION AND ON PERSONAL BASIS ASKED THE QUESTION WHETHER SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD BE

EFFECTIVE OR WHETHER IT MIGHT SIMPLY FURTHER LINK NATO TO THE DISPUTE. LUNS AND SEVERAL COUNCIL MEMBERS ARGUED THAT NATO TRADITION
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PAGE 02 NATO 04627 292034Z

AND PROCEDURE CALLED FOR SOME ACTION AND THAT TO DO NOTHING WOULD BE WORSE THAN TO RISK ADVERSE PUBLICITY ON BLAND COUNCIL RESOLUTION. IT WAS FINALLY AGREED LUNS WOULD ISSUE A SIMILAR STATEMENT INDICATING HE WAS DOING SO IN HIS CAPACITY AS SYG

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

AFTER CONSULTATION WITH COUNCIL. END SUMMARY

1. SYG LUNS CALLED A PRIVATE COUNCIL MEETING IN HIS OFFICE ON SEPTEMBER 28 TO REVIEW LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UK-ICELAND FISHERIES

DISPUTE AND TO INQUIRE WHAT ACTION MIGHT BE TAKEN IN THIS CRISIS. LUNS NOTED THE LAST-MINUTE APPEAR FROM PRIME MINISTER HEATH WHICH WAS TRANSMITTED TO THE GOI ON SEPTEMBER 26, AND THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE GOI INFORMING THE BRITISH THAT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WILL BE SERVERED ON OCTOBER 3 UNLESS THE BRITISH AGREE TO WITHDRAW NAVAL UNITS AND TUG BOATS BEYOND THE 50- MILE LIMIT BY THAT TIME.

2. BRITISH PERMREP (PECK) REVIEWED THE POSITION OF HIS GOVERNMENT IN STANDARD TERMS EMPHASIZING THE LEGALITY OF THAT POSITION AND THE WILLINGNESS OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS AT ANY TIME.

3. ICELANDIC PERMREP (TOMASSON) REPLIED WITH RECITATION OF ICELANDIC POSITION EMPHASIZING THAT HIS GOVERNMENT SIMPLY

DID NOT AGREE WITH "FACTS" ON WHICH BRITISH BASED SO-CALLED LEGALITY OF ITS POSITION. TOMASSON CONFIRMED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD RECEIVED THE SEPTEMBER 26 UK MESSAGE BEFORE DECIDING ON THE DATE OF OCTOBER 3 FOR SEVERANCE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HE IMPLIED THAT RELATIONS WOULD HAVE BEEN BROKEN OFF SOONER, BUT THE UK NOTE PERSUADED THE GOI TO PROVIDE FOR A ONE-WEEK "BREATHING SPACE".

4. CANADIAN PERMREP (MENZIES) AND BELGIAN PERMREP (DE STAERCKE), CONFIDENT THEY WERE SPEAKING FOR ALL THEIR COLLEAGUES, DEPLORED THE SITUATION, EXPRESSED THEIR DISMAY AT THE INABILITY OF THE PARTIES TO GET TOGETHER, CHARACTERIZED THE DISTANCE BWTWEEN THE TWO POSITIONS AS "NOT GREAT", CALLED UPON THE PARTIES TO ABANDON "LEGALITIES", AND ENCOURAGED THE SYG OF DISCUSSION OF THE "REPORT OF THE THREE WISE MEN" AND WHETHER IT EMPOWERED THE SYG OR THE COUNCIL TO TAKE SOME FORM OF ACTION TO INTERCEDE IN THIS MATTER. (SEE 1956 REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THREE, CHAPTER 2, PARA 57.).

5. LUNS INQUIRED WHETHER THE COUNCIL WAS UNANIMOUSLY OPPOSED TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NATO 04627 292034Z

SEVERANCE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN ICELAND AND BRITAIN, WHE-THER ALL MEMBERS HOPED THAT THE PARTIES WOULD SIT DOWN TOGETHER, AND WHETHER THE COUNCIL FAVORED ALL STEPS THAT MIGHT MOVE THE TWO SIDES TOWARD A COMPROMISE. IF SO, LUNS SUGGESTED THAT A STATEMENT TO THAT EFFECT BE SENT BY THE COUNCIL TO LONDON AND REYKJAVIK.

6. RUMSFELD REITERATED U.S. POSITION OF APPRECIATING SYG EFFORTS, HOPING BOTH PARTIES WOULD WORK TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE AND DESIRING TO KEEP THE BASE ISSUE SEPARATE. HE SAID HE WAS WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS ON SYG PROPOSALS. ON PERSONAL BASIS HE SAID IT WAS PROBABLE SUCH A COUNCIL STATEMENT WOULD BECOME KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC EITHER THROUGH NATO SOURCES OR SOURCES IN THE UK OR

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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ICELAND. RUMSFELD SAID HE HEARD NO SUGGESTION DURING THE DISCUSSIONS THAT SUCH A STATEMENT MIGHT HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON THE DISPUTE. ON THE OTHER HAND, ASSUMING COUNCIL STATEMENT HAD NO EFFECT IN DISPUTE HE ASKED IF PUBLICITY OF SUCH A COUNCIL STATEMENT MIGHT HAVE THE EFFECT OF SIMPLY FURTHER LINKING NATO TO THIS DISPUTE AS WELL AS MAKING NATO LOOK INEFFECTIVE. RUMSFELD SAID HE WOULD REPORT THIS TO HIS GOVERNMENT AND SEEK INSTRUCTIONS IF THAT WAS DESIRED.

7. LUNS AND SEVERAL PERMREPS ARGUED THAT THEY WERE CONFIDENT THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE COUNCIL TO MAKE THIS MINIMAL GESTURE THAN TO DO NOTHING. THEY FELT THAT IT SHOULD BE DONE PROMPTLY AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO ADVERSE EFFECTS IN THE PRESS, THAT NATO WAS ALREADY LINKED TO THE DISPUTE IN THE EYES OF MANY, AND BOTH TRADITION AND THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THREE OBLIGED THE COUNCIL TO TAKE SOME ACTION.

8. IN THE END, COUNCIL AGREED TO A NORWEGIAN PROPOSAL THAT LUNS SEND A STATEMENT ALONG THE ABOVE LINES TO THE UK AND ICELAND, IN HIS CAPACITY AS SYG, INDICATING THAT HE IS TAKING THIS INITIATIVE AFTER HAVING CONSULTED WITH THE COUNCIL.
RUMSFELD

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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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